

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 031539

EXDIS MIL ADDEE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 031539 ACTION BANGKOK DTD 12 FEB

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S E C R E T STATE 031539

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:MARR, MASS, TH

SUBJECT:LONG-TERM US MILITARY FORCE LEVELS IN THAILAND

FYI: IN ORDER TO RETAIN A CREDIBLE AND FLEXIBLE COMBAT
CAPABILITY AT AN ACCEPTABLE COST DURING THE NEXT TWO YEARS,
THE FOLLOWING HAS BEEN DECIDED:

1. AFTER THE CURRENT DRY SEASON IS OVER, TO REDUCE THE US
MILITARY FORCE LEVEL IN THAILAND FROM THE PRESENT 27,000
MILITARY SPACES DOWN TO 21,300 BY THE END OF FY 1975.

2. REDUCE MILITARY MANPOWER SPACES FROM 21,300 ON JULY 1,
1975 TO 12,000 ON JUNE 30, 1976. THE BULK OF THE COMBAT
FORCES INVOLVED IN THIS REDUCTION ARE TO BE WITHDRAWN IN

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THE FOURTH QUARTER OF FY 1976. THIS LEVEL SHOULD PROVIDE

FOR A COMBAT FORCE OF SIX B-52'S, TWO FIGHTER SQUADRONS,
ONE AC-130 SQUADRON, SIX RF-4'S, THREE USN P-3'S, FOUR
U-2R'S, AND NECESSARY SUPPORT AIRCRAFT.

3. REDUCE TO 10,000 MILITARY MANPOWER SPACES BY DECEMBER
31, 1976, WITH THE BULK OF THIS REDUCTION TAKING PLACE IN
THE FIRST QUARTER OF FY 1977. THIS LEVEL SHOULD PROVIDE
FOR A COMBAT FORCE OF TWO FIGHTER SQUADRONS, SIX RF-4'S,
THREE USN P-3'S, FOUR U-2R'S, AND NECESSARY SUPPORT
AIRCRAFT.

4. RETAIN UDORN AIRBASE IN CARETAKER STATUS AT LEAST
THROUGH FY 1977. SPECIFIC TIMING FOR TERMINATION OF US
OPERATIONS AT UTAPAO AND KORAT AIRBASES WILL BE DETERMINED
LATER. PLAN ON USING UDORN FOR TRAINING OPERATIONS BY
TACTICAL AIR UNITS ON TEMPORARY DEPLOYMENT FROM OTHER
BASES IN THE PACIFIC AREA.

5. THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, IN COORDINATION WITH THE
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY BANGKOK,
SHOULD BEGIN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT
TO INFORM THEM OF OUR THAILAND RESIDUAL FORCE PLANNING, TO
NEGOTIATE AN ACCEPTABLE CONTRACT ARRANGEMENT FOR MAINTAIN-
ING UDORN AIRBASE IN CARETAKER STATUS, AND TO NEGOTIATE
RE-ENTRY AND ROTATION RIGHTS AT THAT BASE. IF THOSE
RIGHTS CANNOT BE NEGOTIATED, THIS DECISION ON SIZE AND
PACE OF WITHDRAWALS REMAINS SUBJECT TO REVIEW.

6. NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS ON THESE WITHDRAWALS WILL BE
MADE UNTIL AFTER THE RESPECTIVE DRY SEASONS. END FYI.

7. PENDING FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS FROM HERE, WHICH WE HOPE
TO BE ISSUING TO YOU SHORTLY, YOU SHOULD SAY NOTHING TO
THE RTG. INGERSOLL UNQTE INGERSOLL

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